

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/996,845

Examiner

Lynda Jasmin

Applicant(s)

MENON ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 7/14/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 2 and 7-17.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Krishna Kalidindi on September 28, 2005.

Claims 1 and 9 have been amended as follows:

In claim 1:

At line 3, the phrase --the method-- has been replaced by "and" before the term --for--

At line 4, the term --and-- has been deleted before the term --comprising--

At line 5, the term "computerized" has been added before the term --centralized--

At line 9, the term --similar-- has been replaced by the phrase "substantially the same"

At line 10, the phrase --that can be-- has been deleted

At line 11, the term --a similar-- has been replaced by the phrase "substantially the same"

At line 17, the term "selecting" has been added before the phrase --a vendor--

At line 18, the phrase --being selected-- has been deleted

At line 24, the term "submitting" has been added before the phrase --the qualified--, and the phrase --being submitted-- has been deleted

At line 25, the term "producing" has been added before the phrase --an agreement--, and the phrase --being produced-- has been deleted.

In claim 9:

At line 2, the term --an-- before the term --individual-- has been replaced by the phrase "the at least one".

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art, Putt (2003/0097296) discloses a method for managing service transactions with the concept of selecting at least one of the prospective service providers to perform a project, negotiating terms of performance with the prospective service providers, monitoring performance of the project and, upon completion of the project, requesting evaluations of the performance. It is clear from the description of Putt that the prior art does not considered the possibility of "aggregating requests around an organization that are substantially the same for concurrent handling in combination with considering other non-requesting entities of the organization expected to make the same request" as recited in the sole independent claim 1.

The next closest prior art, Berton et al. (6,920,430 B1) discloses a method for an electronic procurement for state governments having a plurality of agencies. Berton further discloses a plurality of vendors that are required to be qualified by the state (much like the Federal Supply Catalogue System) whereby items sold and their prices are made available to state purchasers, who can select which item and from which qualified vendor they may purchase the item. Once the goods/services have been

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received and accepted, accounting entries are set up for the cost to the agency to disburse funds, and payment is made using the business model rules calculation for the amounts due to the vendor and the fee amounts to be put into the eProcurement Reserve Fund. It is clear from the description of Putt that the prior art does not considered the possibility of "aggregating requests around an organization that are substantially the same for concurrent handling in combination with considering other non-requesting entities of the organization expected to make the same request" as recited in the sole independent claim 1.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Nagel et al. (2003/0065573 A1) discloses a system and method for procuring goods and services for a plurality of entities having a common relationship.

Corbitt "The Net Works" Credit Management discloses the impact of the Internet in changing the ways in which business operates. Corbitt further discloses electronic procurement will allow staff to order goods online direct from suppliers without having to pass purchase orders between departments.

Mejabi "An Exploration of Concept in System Integration" Integrated Manufacturing Systems discloses the concept that integrated system must capitalize on

the capabilities provided by its subsystem entities in providing its own functionality. A requestor can request services from a provider along with relevant details on service terms.

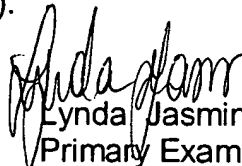
Business Wire "Concur Technologies Ups the Ante on Web Procurement with Release of CompanyStore 5.0" discloses CompanyStore streamlines corporate procurement by utilizing a simple browser interface that enables employees to easily order supplies and services while tracking the information and order status from their desktops.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lynda Jasmin whose telephone number is (571) 272-6782. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday- Friday (9:30-6:00) with Thursday Telework.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski can be reached on (571) 272-6771. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

 9/28/05
Lynda Jasmin
Primary Examiner
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